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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a brief account, based upon available Chinese materials, of the history of Chinese libraries under communism. The discussion of the effects upon libraries of the changing political, economic, and social conditions of China after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 is divided into four sections: the Young People's Republic and the First Five Year Plan, 1949-1957; the Second Five Year Plan and the Prelude to the Cultural Revolution, 1958-1965; the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976; and After the Cultural Revolution, 1976-1980. Emphasis is placed upon the impact of changes within the Communist Party on library operations, library role, library collections, library use, and library development in Chinese society. Recent achievements in the rejuvenation of the Chinese library system after the arrest of the Gang of Four are outlined, and the current state of library education in China is described. (JL)

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CHINESE LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY EDUCATION, 1949-1980: TRUTH AND MYTH IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

by

Lee-hsia Hsu Ting

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Chinese Libraries and Library Education, 1949-1980: Truth and Myth in the People's Republic of China

Lee-hsia Hsu Ting

For over two decades after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China became almost terra incognita to Americans. After President Nixon's visit to China in 1972, there was a sudden surge of interest in China in this country. With a crack of its doors open, many foreigners were anxious to visit that mysterious land, but few had the good fortune to be admitted.

The reports they brought back gave us an impression that China was a highly disciplined and motivated society of thrifty and hard working people, and that Chairman Mao was extremely successful in his experiment of remodelling human nature. It was like a Utopia, dreamed about by people for thousands of years but now finally realized. Among the modern Marco Polos, the few librarians who became instant experts in a few short weeks, fed us with the fantastic stories, such as "The Cultural Revolution hardly affected Chinese libraries at all," or "Chinese Libraries Carried out Chairman Mao's Dictum: serve the people." They really made us envy those fortunate super-human beings under the Chinese Communist rule.

The year 1976 was a very eventful one for the Chinese. It saw the death of both the moderate Premier Chou En-lai and the almighty Chairman Mao. In October of that year, the Gang of Four, led by Mao's wife Chiang Ching, were arrested, and the moderates came into power. China began to devote herself to the four modernizations. Millions of Chinese who had been wronged were rehabilitated. With the development of tourism and cultural exchange programs, more foreigners can visit China and see China now as it really is. The bubble

of Utopia has burst. Many foreign radicals have even become disillusioned.

How much in the reports that we have been fed is truth? How much is myth? What have been the purposes and functions of Chinese libraries? Have Chinese libraries been able to preserve and disseminate knowledge without fear? Have readers been able to find free access to the library resources? How have the Chinese libraries coped with all the political ups and downs in China? What has China done to train the necessary personnel to man the libraries? Although there have been a number of reports on Chinese libraries, especially for the post-Mao era, in the form of travelogs, few, if any, can be called serious research. This paper is an attempt to find answers to questions such as those listed above. It is in fact a brief account of the history of Chinese libraries under communism based on available Chinese materials.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC AND THE FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN, 1949-1957

Shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 Chairman Mao announced his "leaning to one side" policy. It was no surprise that Soviet influence soon dominated everything in China, including the libraries. Teaching materials were imported from the Soviet Union duty free, and so were Soviet experts who flocked to China in droves. Lenin's views on libraries as a means of mass education and indoctrination profoundly influenced Chinese policies. The communists considered the library's practice of serving a small number of intelligensia in the old days as "erroneous." The purpose of the library became now "to serve politics, production, workers, peasants, soldiers, and scientific studies."

Following the Soviet example, Chinese libraries were divided into three principal systems: the public libraries (under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture), the Academy of Science libraries (under the Chinese Academy of Science), and the academic libraries (under the Ministry of Higher Education).

According to one statistic, at the end of 1956, there were 375 public libraries under the Ministry of Culture, plus 2,332 reading rooms attached to the cultural halls, 67 libraries in the Academy of Science system, and 225 academic libraries. The total collections numbered 106,625,462 volumes. Besides, there were about 10,000 libraries in teacher's colleges and schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, not to mention reading rooms belonging to other organizations, agencies and armed forces. Many of these libraries were on new premises.

As compared with what it was in days of yore, the nature of the collections was changed too. In all the libraries, Reactionary, obscene and absurd publications were purged. Marxist-Leninist and Maoist works, which had been banned under the Kuomintang days, were acquired on a large scale; and so were popular reading materials. The government subsidized the acquisition of many scientific books published in 1937-1949, when, because of the Sino-Japanese War and the subsequent Civil War, libraries did not increase their holdings in any significant way. Library budgets and staff members were also increased. Take public libraries under the Ministry of Culture, for example. In 1957 the budget was increased by 372.3% over that of 1953 when the first Five-Year Plan was inaugurated, and the number of staff members reached 3,714, more than twice that of 1950.

Circulation seemed to be on the increase too. In the year of 1955, public libraries had a circulation figure of 1,669,000 volumes. Besides, they established book mobile units or collective lending units to take books to readers' places of work. Among the 5,230,000 volumes circulated in this manner, 80% of the borrowers were workers, peasants and soldiers.

Rural libraries (reading rooms) and labor union libraries were the two new kinds of libraries that developed most rapidly during these years. Labor union libraries were run by the labor unions in the factories, mines and industry, intended primarily to propagate Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, to raise workers' political awareness, and to increase their knowledge in technology and production. Although they were often small, they tried to meet the cultural, scientific and technological needs of the working masses. A national conference was organized in September 1955 by the All-China Federation of Labor Unions to establish library policies, such as purpose, function, organization and financial support. By the end of 1956, there were reportedly 17,486 such libraries located in both cities and countryside, with collections totalling 21,727,019 volumes. With the development of the cooperative movement in the farms, rural libraries which often were reading rooms sprang up rapidly. Their purpose was "to imcrease knowledge of the peasants, to popularize cultural and technological knowledge, to excite enthusiasm for production and to promote production." By the end of 1956, there were supposed to be 182,960 such libraries. The 1956-57 Program for Rural Development contained plans for the establishment of a basic cultural network in the rural areas within seven to twelve years.

Not all the librarieans liked the Soviet influence on, and the Party's domination of, libraries. They held more traditional views about libraries and did not agree that libraries were to serve mainly the workers, the peasants, and the soldiers. However, the feeble opposition or disagreement was crushed in 1957 during the anti-righest movement, and libraries were purportedly purged of these "bad elements."

During this period, libraries of all types conducted study groups, lectures, exhibits, book talks, etc., to propagate political movements initiated by the

government, such as the land reform, suppression of counter-revolutionaries, Resist-American and Aid-Korea campaign, Three-antis and Five-antis. In 1956 the government declared a "March towards science" movement. Consequently all libraries emphasized services in this area. The use of the library not only for the distribution of Marxist literature, but also for the active teaching and mobilization of the populace, was perhaps inspired by the practices of Li Ta-chao (1888-1927), a political theorist who played a vital role in introducing Marxism into China. His outrage at the encroachment of foreign influence in China gave him a very strong feeling of nationalism. When he was the head librarian of the Peking University from 1981 to mid-1920s, he utilized to its fullest measure the library as a center for political activism, and involved the library in the dissemination of his political views. Under him, the young Mao Tze-Tung worked as a library assistant. Thus it is not surprising that the profession should subsequently be recognized as a particularly significant element with the Marxist framework.

In short, the library system taken over from the Kuomintang government in 1949 was very inadequate, and the Communists assigned great importance to the development of modern libraries. On the basis of a succession of directives published in the 1950s, work was devoted to promoting planning, centralization, uniformity and expansion. While building large library centers, China also established activities at grass-roots level in the villages and at places of work. The achievement was quite impressive.

THE SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN AND THE PRELUDE TO THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1958-1965

In 1958, the second Five-Year Plan began. Liu Shao-ch'i's speech in the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress set down the plans for cultural affairs: Among other things, the government intended to eradicate illiteracy, to reform the Chinese language, to develop socialist literature and art, to build up new intellectuals, to reform old intellectuals, and to establish an

army of intellectuals among the working class and Marxist theoreticians. Liu's speech pointed out a new direction for the libraries.

The most notable development was library cooperation. Late in 1957, with the encouragement of Premier Choi En-lai, Chinese libraries started the library coordination program, which designeated two main library centers (Peking and Shanghai), and nine secondary library centers (Wuhan, Shenyang, Nanking, Kwang-chow, Chengtu, Sian, Tientsin, Harbin, Lanchow). Later on, library centers or coordination committees were also founded in some provinces. Vertically, large public libraries were instructed by the Ministry of Culture to help smaller ones under the jurisdiction of the same unit. Through book lending and other experimental projects, the provincial libraries had the responsibility to assist county libraries in their respective province, municipal libraries were to assist district libraries, and the county (or district) libraries were to assist those at a lower level, and so on. Many small libraries worked hand in hand with local cultural halls, bookstores, and museums to form a cultural network in the villages. Public libraries were designated as coordination centers. Nanking Library, for instance, organized all libraries in the three principal systems of the province of Kiangsu according to their specialties. Larger libraries in one system were made to assist smaller ones in the same system. For instance, Nanking Engineering College Library was made to assist technical school libraries and other libraries specializing in mining technology in the province. Horizontally, local library coordination committees, composed of representatives from local libraries, met regularly to discuss problems of mutual concern. To train librarians, some libraries combined efforts to offer courses of library science in the so-called "politically red, academically expert" colleges, with experienced practicing librarians serving as part-time instructors. National bibliographies, union catalogs, indexes, etc., were being

compiled; limited centralized cataloging and interlibrary loans were instituted. In some areas, a reader could receive a library borrowing card good for all the libraries in that area. In the spirit of cooperation, many large libraries shared their resources with their "brother libraries." For instance, libraries in Shanghai, a city which for many years had been the cultural and publishing center of China, transferred 500,000 volumes to help small libraries in six remote provinces, such as Kansu and Sinkiang.

In March 1958, a conference on the Great Leap Forward for the Public Libraries was held in Peking under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture. Thrity-three libraries, including National Peking Library, challenged all other libraries in the nation to improve service including circulation, service to readers, acquisition, publicizing books, cleaning up back logs, in-service training, library cooperation, streamlining library operations, running libraries with the least funds, and having librarians with correct thoughts and expert knowledge and skills. Half a year later, all libraries of the Chinese Academy of Science held a meeting. Academic libraries, school libraries and libraries in many provinces also had their own meetings. Everybody was said to be very enthusiastic. The Academy of Science libraries were open to other agencies, and the number of readers increased dramatically. There was a 160% increase in collective group borrowers and a 337% increase in individual borrowers over the previous year. Many libraries were "creative" enough to find various means to get the books to the readers in the countryside, factories, restaurants, meeting places, barber shops and even public baths. One district library in Peking established 412 circulation centers in half a year.

According to reports published in China in 1959, under the principle of getting things done with the least amount of money, or even no money at all, libraries everywhere were supposed to utilize all their manpower and resources

in the most efficient manner. Many of the backlogs were cleaned up and made available to readers. The Peking Library, by using simplified cataloging, processed half a million duplicates. According to incomplete statistics, 33 public libraries at the provincial and municipal level reduced their staff members by 21.8% and operating funds 23.6%, and at the same time greatly increased their efficiency. The majority of the libraries were said to be open every day.

It was also in 1958 that the first public library was established in Ching-hai, as well as Tibet. The provincial library at Kirin with a collection of 400,000 volumes also opened its doors. Even more impressive was Ning-hsia. Before 1949 there was only one reading room with 4,000 volumes. Now in 1958, there were 11 public libraries at the county level with a collection of 259,521 volumes, 1,002 village libraries, 12,000 reading rooms in factories and industries, more than 3,000 college and school libraries. People in even the remotest places, it seems, had facilities to read in and borrow books from.

Furthermore, numerous circulating libraries operated by the common people sprang up like mushrooms. Take for instance, in June 1958, one district in the City of Tienstin published the rules and regulations for governing this kind of library. Only one month later, at the end of July, 152 libraries were established in that district. According to a statistic compiled from 88 of the 152 libraries, they had altogether a combined collection of 61,438 volumes and a volunteer staff of 232 members. In another county in Ho pei, between May 1 and August 1, under the leadership of the local Party commissioner, a total of 174 libraries at various levels were founded and 83 old ones were restored. By June 1958, there were 3,847 circulating libraries in China. By the end of December 1958, according to incomplete statistics, there were 35,659 commune libraries in the province of Honan alone, and 67,685 in Kwangtung.

Although all the figures came from unimpeachable official sources, the rosy

picture sounds indeed too good to be true. One cannot but wonder how so many libraries could spring up in a matter of months. Did libraries really have such "unprecedented" achievements in China as claimed? In order to understand the real situation, we have to trace briefly the political developments in that country.

As early as 1956 there were signs of strain and frustration in the Peking leadership arising from an apparent division over methods of speeding up the pace of industrialization and modernization and from a growing disenchantment with the Soviet model. In March 1957 Mao called for a protracted struggle to defeat erroneous ideas and "revisionism." The anti-rightist movement began. The momentous program of the great Leap Forward and the Communes launched in 1958, suggested a general shift leftward. Later in that year, as the Great Leap Forward took an economically disastrous turn and the Sino-Soviet rift (which had begun in 1957) grew, Mao gave up his control over the daily affairs of the state without relinquishing supreme authority. The Tenth Plenum in September 1962 marked the end of a comparatively liberal period. Mao resumed his active leadership, delegated more power to his wife, Chiang Ching, and ushered in a period of renewed emphasis on idealogy and on the thought and personality of Mao. In 1963 Chiang Ching began to dominate the cultural acitivites, scholarly and professional journals were suspended one after another. The leaders shifted still further leftward in 1964, with a violent attack on those with allegedly "capitalist" and "revionist" leanings in tones that anticipated the cultural Revolution.

With the Anti-rightist movement, the "large character wallposters" appeared, and experts with the so-called wrong thoughts were persecuted. The slogan "Put Politics in command" meant that education must serve proletarian politics and therefore must be combined with physical labor. Thought reform or ideological remodeling for intellectuals was necessary. Students and teachers were transferred randomly to non-academic jobs and classes became irregular. Students often read

only the Peking Review. From then on, especially in 1961-62, all schools began to emphasize one's social and family background, instead of academic achievement. Academically able students could not be admitted into universities if they had come from the wrong class and the wrong family. The Great Leap Forward set the economic targets so impossibly high that the only thing people could do was to fabricate figures. It thus started the bad practice of highly inflated figures and unrealistic claims. During those years, reservoirs or irrigation channels were built whether or not they were useful. In the general zeal to develop the steel industry, even old ladies' scissors and family cooking utensils could not escape the fate of being melted down by the government. Forests were felled to be used as fuel, which often disturbed the ecological balance. They reached all these short-sighted "accomplishments" so that officials could make impressive reports. As a result, education, industry and agriculture all suffered setbacks. Libraries of course, could not escape the same fate, as may be shown in the following summary of the situation:

1. The rate and scale of library development were far beyond what the country could afford. In the 1958 conference on the Great Leap Forward on Library work, many libraries, without careful analysis of their own resources and manpower set their objectives much too high. Concentrating on increasing the readers and circulation figures, they neglected many of the "behind the scenes" operations, such as cataloging and collection maintenance. Many books were thus lost or damaged, although after 1962 libraries began to have some kind of reform and made some improvements on this respect.

2. In their emphasis on serving the masses, they neglected the needs of experts in their scientific research.

3. The leadership stressed the destruction of old rules and regulations

in order to build up the new. However, often the old were destroyed before the new were built up. Consequently, in many library operations there were no rules to follow, and chaos resulted.

4. Library research suffered greatly, because around 1960 the radicals were not realistic or analytical in criticizing the so-called "captalistic library science," but gave librarians damaging labels at will and thus lost a great deal of expertise. In 1964 there began a discussion of how to "revolutionalize" the staff members' thought. All these discussions were intended to build up staff members that would be "politically red and academically expert," as the communists put it.

Libraries continued to take cues from the Party. In 1956 the government declared a "March toward Science" movement. Consequently all libraries emphasized services in this area. After the Party Central Committee decided to put the emphasis on agriculture, libraries of all types devoted their resources to serve agriculture. Rural (commune) libraries developed quickly. In the more established libraries, besides the multitude of volumes for indoctrination, readers in those days could have free access to technical books. The ideologically "incorrect" or "pernicious" ones were of course, stashed away.

THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1966-1976

In 1966, the thunderstorm of the Cultural Revolution broke out, and plunged the country into unprecedented disasters politically, economically, and culturally.

What was the Cultural Revolution? How could the extreme leftists become so powerful that they could turn the country upside down without resistance? The reasons were of course many and complex. One of them was Mao's prestige. A great revolutionary, Mao had led the Chinese Communist Party to power, but he was not

a statesman. Even after those opposed to him were crushed, he continued to use the same methods of class struggle, to stress the dictatorship of the proletariat and to advocate violence. Therefore he treated even the most devoted communists like enemies, and created political chaos. Under him, the extremists ignored also the economic laws. Out of touch completely with economic reality, they confused management with ownership and tried to use political ideology and class struggle to promote economic reform. They disregarded the established policy that one should be rewarded in accordance with one's contribution, but put into practice the so-called "equalism." As a result, workers did not work but just exaggerated their production figures. The country's economic development was disrupted. Furthermore, they despised knowledge and the intellectuals who use brain instead of body. They regarded intellectuals as capitalists and labelled them the "stinking no. 9" i.e., the lowest level even among the undesirables, lower than the landlords, the rich farmers, the counter-revolutionists, the bad elements, the rightists, the traitors. They did not try to upgrade the laboring class, but tried to eliminate the difference between the laboring class and the intellectuals by forcing the latter to use their hands only, and thus greatly hampered scientific and cultural development in China.

The worst characteristic of the Cultural Revolution was dehumanization. The Communist revolution was successful in 1949 because the revolutionaries took upon themselves responsibilities to right the wrongs of the oppressed. To many Chinese, it meant a wave of humanitarianism. But now humanitarianism was criticised as a strain in capitalist thought and in revisionism. Concern with human nature was accused as "the theoretical basis of all counter-revolutionary revisionist roaders." In this cruel political struggle, the extremists insisted that "human individuals do not exist, only the class is real." What is the class?

According to Kang Sheng, the extremists' theoretician, "class distinction is based not only on economic considerations, but also on political and ideological ones." In other words, any one disobeying their orders would be "non-proletarian," and therefore "non-human." Since he had lost his claim to be a human being, he should be treated in inhuman ways. Even his relatives who wanted to survive had to despise him, sever relations with him and trample upon him.

Following Mao's instructions that class struggle had to continue perpetually in order to sustain revolutionary fervor, young radicals searched the country for remnants of "bourgeois" ideology and "revisionism" and destroyed whatever appeared objectionable to them without scruples. Their chief targets were the old revolutionary leaders of the moderate faction within the Party, and the specialists in cultural and educational circles who valued professional competence above ideological commitment. "The Sixteen-Point Directive Decision of the Central Committee on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," which they professed to support, maintained that China had reached "a new stage in the socialist revolution" which required a total transformation of public opinion by "the destruction of the entire old civilization." The old civilization was specified as the "four olds" -- old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits of the "exploiting classes." To achieve this goal they were urged to "totally topple, smash, and expose counter-revolutionary revisionists, the bourgeois rightists, and reactionary bourgeois academic savants," who "must never be allowed to rise again!" Led by self-styled radicals headed by the Gang of Four, who were actually interested only in establishing absolute control and eliminating all obstacles to power, the Red Guards terrorized the populace for years. The tyranny of the ignorant and the self-righteous plunged China into an unprecedented disaster.

For over a decade, therefore, methods learned from European fascism, as is now widely admitted in China, were employed to buttress traditional feudalism

and despotism. It was not just enough to destroy people who were labelled "rightists, counter-revolutionaries," "capitalist roaders," or "class enemies." All books and publications that might inspire independent thinking and help produce offenders had to be burnt or stashed away forever so that a new generation, blind and pliant tools of their leaders' will, might be born. Almost all the classical heritage of China, as well as that of the West, was marked for extinction because, as the Gang of Four declared, they "prefer workers without culture to exploiters with culture and intellectual aristocrats." According to librarians in Kwangchow, Chiang Ching believed that, from the Renaissance in Europe to the Cultural Revolution in China, the cultures of the whole world should be called a total blank. Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, I was told in Shanghai, spoke contemptuously of libraries, claiming that only two shelves of books (meaning those pertaining to Marx, Lenin and Mao) out of the millions, should be allowed to exist. He believed that "it would be better for the intellectuals to forget everything they had learned from primary school to college." Yao Wen-yuan clamored that the Chinese intellectuals had "the sham academic knowledge of the bourgeoisie." Once one "acquires knowledge, one becomes bourgeois" and "one who acquires professional competency forgets the dictatorship of the proletariat." All intellectuals were condemned as "careerists," "freaks and monsters," "exploiters and intellectual aristocrats." Punishments dealt out to intellecutals included public humiliation at mass rallies, home arrests, detention in office, imprisonment, endless interrogations and criticisms, and torture. Even after they had confessed their own "erroreous acts and crimes," they still had to be exiled to work farms far away from home and to constantly confess their "crimes." Those who could commit suicide were the fortunate ones. The majority did not dare to take their own lives in order that their children might not be penalized for the parents' "cowardice." Their homes were of

course searched over and over again, and their private libraries and other belongings trucked away, destroyed or confiscated.

To illustrate how the intellectuals had to live with lies and act like robots, I shall quote a passage from a recent essay by Pa Chin, a popular writer who became famous in the 1930s:

> During these long years our literary classics became the "four olds." People relentlessly destroyed them as if they were rats crossing the streets. I myself destroyed these books, magazines, letters and manuscripts which I had kept as treasures for years. At that time, I really regarded "ignorance" as my goal for reform. One morning, I remember, I was toiling in the kitchen of the Shanghai Branch of the Writers League when the Red Guards came looking for the "freaks and monsters" to whip. I tried very hard to hide myself. When I was caught I had to declare my own evil deeds, and admit that I had never done one good thing in my whole life. Lao Chu, the janitor, was sweeping in the yard. The Red Guard asked him who he was. He proudly answered: "I am of the laboring class." How I envied him! There was a time when I really believed that only a few formula stories were literature. All the rest were garbage. I totally and completely negated myself. I lost the sense of right and wrong. I saw neither the past nor the future. I had no opinion of my own, and I lived without using my mind. I lowered my head, I avoided people, and was so afraid to hear my name mentioned or my novels talked about. In 1967-1968, this was my state of mind, so pitiable, so despicable. This was really bedevilled . . . I completely negated myself, literature, and beauty . . . I even believed that an ideal society was one where there was no culture, no knowledge, and of course no literary resources. I was in a trance. I had been "knocked down to the ground and trumpled on." I dared not say or do anything, fearing that I might get my friends and relatives into trouble. To be able to keep alive was all I could do . . . During these days, I could not think and I dared not think about literature and literary resources, not to mention establishing an information center to preserve our literary resources.

A regime hostile to accumulated knowledge could not be expected to spare the libraries, which were then supposed to be, like the army, the police, and the courts, tools for the "dictatorship of the prolitariat," in other words, for the promotion of fascist-feudalist policies. Government propaganda, communist classics, Mao's thoughts and formula stories expounding

radical doctrines alone could be published and read. All libraries were closed for periods of various lengths of time, as the extremists could not allow the library to be "the paradise of the capitalist class." Yuan Ting reported in 1979 that "for exactly five years, many libraries were closed and had no new acquisitions. Shanghai Library was closed from 1967 to 1970. Even after it re-opened its door in 1970, the card catalogs and most of its Chinese books, except for a small number containing "correct thoughts," were off-limits to the general reader. The Western-languages section was nominally open, but no one dared to use it for fear of being labelled "admirers of the West, and trucklers to foreigners." Even scientific and technological books published before the Cultural Revolution were banned. No book could be checked out. Few readers ever came to the library, since everyone had the works of Marx, Lenin and Mao at home.

Academic libraries suffered even more than public libraries. As the students, now composed solely of workers, peasants and soldiers, took command, called for short and relevant courses, and spent their energy "making revolution," knowledge, technological know-how, and publications all became targets of scorn. Libraries which served the instructional and research needs were accused of being "centers of feudalism, capitalism and revisionism," "tools of bourgeois intellectuals for the control of the school," "scenes of crime where bourgeois intellectuals achieve their fame," and "weapons of imperialist aggressions in China." In short, they were doomed for destruction. Many libraries with a long history and good collections were thus closed. Under the pretext of saving foreign exchange from being spent on useless materials, subscriptions to foreign periodicals were suspended. In 1975, when the Gang of Four were most influential, many libraries were forced to abolish faculty reading rooms and forbidden to assist instructors in research.

The Academy of Science libraries were also in disarray, since basic scientific research was virtually abandoned, as Fang I, the head of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, admitted in 1977.

As it was a crime to possess the "black products" of "feudalism, capitalism and revisionism," i.e., materials containing the so-called "incorrect" thoughts, many libraries tried to get rid of such materials by burning or destroying them. Some gave them the so-called "technical treatment," by cutting off or blackening out undesireable parts of these books or journals. No record was kept of such irretrievable losses. Lu Shan Library in Kiangsi may be used to illustrate the fate of many. The extremists took over the library and used it as their headquarters and dormitory. They sent away those staff members who did not agree with them, or forced them to change their profession. Books were tied up in bundles and left in dark, damp corners. Many rare books were covered with mildews. Many technological books became the food of the termites. Parts of books were cut out with knives and many books were covered with holes. Later, bundles after bundles of books were burnt to ashes.

Librarians were all labelled "watch dogs" of imperialists. All but two library schools were suspended. Even in these two universities - Peking and Wuhan - there were few students for few dared to study library science, which was regarded by the extremists as of no use. There actually was not much that could be taught, because students were not allowed to study about libraries in any period or any country. Traditional library rules and regulations insuring smooth operation of the library were discarded. No scientific management of the library was possible. Many librarians were persecuted or forced to change jobs. One of the most conspicuous examples was the Ko Cheng-hui case. Ko was a librarian of Shanghai Library, which housed a fairly complete collection of Chinese books, periodicals and newspapers published during the 1930's when Chiang Ching was

active in Shanghai as a third rate actress, and Chang Ch'un-ch'iao a minor writer. In 1967, in response to a reference question, Ko discovered that a writer in the 1930's, with the pseudonym of Ti Kei, who had toed the Kuomintang party line, was actually Chang Ch'un-ch'iao. For his discovery he was arrested and repeatedly questioned about the number of people who knew the same information. He was imprisoned for five years and three months. Many of his colleagues in the library, including young pages, were also imprisoned. In fact, about one-seventh of the library's 360 staff members in these years, were jailed or sent to work farms, and numerous others were persecuted in subtler ways.

Peking library was perhaps the only one whose collection did not suffer much during the Cultural Revolution. But many of its staff members, afraid of being labelled reactionaries or backward elements "contemptuous of workers, peasants and soldiers," "restoration of the old," dared not perform their duties. Its large collection was thus never fully utilized.

The following passage from a recent article in a Chinese periodical gives a general picture of these evil days for libraries in the whole country:

> Because of wanton destruction by Lin Piao and the Gang of Four, many libraries were undermined, and their staff members exiled to the countryside. The collections which had been accumulated over a period of many years in some libraries were either carried off, robbed, or burnt. Our nation's libraries were subjected to destructions on an unprecedented scale. In 1965, before the Cultural Revolution, there were 1,100 public libraries at or above the county level. After eleven years [i.e., in 1976], instead of increasing, the number decreased by one-third. Similar situations can be found in libraries of other systems. Academic and labor union libraries suffered even worse devastation. So, in the last decade or so, the history of our libraries is not one of stagnation, but one of enormous devastation and [tragic] retrogression. . . On account of the years of consistent disruption by the Gang of Four, in the hundreds of thousands of nationalized industries and other enterprises, very few could keep their union libraries open and operative.

At the end of the Cultural Revolution, according to 1977 statistics, there were only 851 public libraries. Not all provinces had provincial libraries; only 32% of all the districts in China had libraries at the district level, and 27% of the counties had libraries at the county level. Although 75% of the large cities had municipal libraries, only 7% of the districts under their jurisdiction had libraries. No one knows how many of the more than 50,000 communes, 680,000 production brigades, and 4,000,000 production teams had libraries of their own. The Chinese Academy of Science and the universities fared better. Generally speaking, each of the 100 plus research institutions in science and 800 plus institutions of higher education had some sort of libraries. But of the more than 200,000 secondary schools and 1,000,000 elementary schools, only a small fraction had libraries. The number of trade union libraries, as has been pointed out before, had also become greatly reduced.

AFTER THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1976-1980

When the Gang of Four were arrested on October 6, 1976, the country was actually in shambles, especially in the areas of science and technology, higher education, and industrial development. To re-set the priority of the nation the central government under the moderate pragmatists tried to redress the past wrongs, acknowledge its own backwardness, and concentrate on the "four modernizations." As the intellecturals rose from the bottom of the social ladder to regain respect and prestige, libraries also came again to the fore. In his report to the First Session of the Fifth National People's Congress, Chairman Hua Confeng called for the "development of all types of libraries in order to organize a network to serve scientific research and the masses." The function of the Chinese library is now again defined as serving the following: (1) mass education, (2) scientific and technological research,

(3) dissemination of information, and (4) preservation of books. Meanwhile, Fang I, Vice Premier in charge of scientific research and technological affairs, was advocating another network of information retrieval: "to build up within eight years enough data bases and terminals and to form an on-line bibliographic and information retrieval network."

To meet the demand of the nation, dedicated librarians have worked hard to pick up the pieces. In libraries that have survived the disaster, catalogs and collections are again made available to the public. Reader services are expanded, and opening hours extended in many libraries. Local library coordination committees in large cities are meeting regularly again. Large libraries, such as National Peking Library and Shanghai Library, again shoulder the responsibility of providing reference and bibliographic service to other libraries, perparing exhibits, offering photoduplication service, extending interlibrary loans, etc. Peking Library, being the national library, is once again responsible for centralized cataloging and providing catalog cards for new books to libraries in the nation. It now exchanges publications with 2,000 libraries in 120 countries, including the Library of Congress. Contacts with foreign libraries are being increased and strengthened. Many activities, such as the compilation of national and other union catalogs, special or subject bibliographies, and indexes, have been resumed. The Academy of Science Library is now in charge of the planning and operations of computerized scientific information retrieval. New library buildings are being planned or built. Library science journals have been revived, and the China Society of Library Science was founded in 1979.

In short, the nation has finally come back to its senses. Libraries once again are performing normal functions as libraries elsewhere in the world, and for the purposes easily understandable to us all. Since these spectacular

progresses in the past few years have been reported by travelers, I shall not dwell on them but try to point out a few problems resulting from the sabotage by extreme radicals, which Chinese libraries have encountered in their efforts for recovery.

First, the collection building and academic freedom. Generally speaking, in larger public libraries, about 1/3 of the collection is Chinese classics in traditional binding, and more than half are books published in China after 1949. While short in scientific and technological publications (the most popular area with users), Chinese novels produced before the Cultural Revolution, especially those in the 1930's (next in popularity), and books in the Western languages, most Chinese libraries are overstocked with duplicates--sometimes as many as several hundred copies of one single title--the worthless propaganda and formula stories printed under the Gang of Four which nobody wants to read now. They have a gigantic job in weeding these dead woods. Meanwhile, there has been difficulty in acquisitions, too. Academic freedom has also been a serious problem. Publications which are considered correct in thought at one time may be found erroneous at another. The possibility of the return of radicalism seems now very remote, but few can be sure what the future may have in store. A policy to set up long-range plans for building up usable collections is necessary so that librarians can forget their fears and once again engage in free inquiry and be allowed to exercise their professional judgement more freely.

Second, the library catalogs. So many library materials were want only destroyed or carelessly misplaced during the Cultural Revolution without a record that library catalogs as they are, may not represent the holdings in the libraries. Many of them are working hard to make the two match, but it may take a long time to accomplish this task.

Third, classification. Many libraries, especially those in the public library system, adopted the Chinese Library Classification. Like the LC Classification, it uses mixed notations--the letters of the Pinyin system and the arabic numerals. According to Marxist-Leninist-Maoist doctrine, all knowledge is divided into five principal groups, which comprise of 22 main classes and 20,000 sub-classes, divisions and subdivisions. This scheme reflects clearly the influence of the Gang of Four, especially in the fields of philosophy and social sciences. It was decided in 1979 that libraries would continue to use this scheme, but necessary revisions are yet to be made to eliminate the influence of the extreme leftists.

Fourth, the personnel and the service. According to a report the 200,000 plus libraries of all types in China are staffed by more than 100,000 people, among whom only 2,000-3,000 are professional librarians. (How can 100,000 people work in 200,000 libraries? I cannot explain, but the number given for professional librarians is more reliable as it may be verified by the number of library department graduates.) Take Peking Library for instance. More than half of the staff members joined the library after 1966. They are young, untrained, and inexperienced. In Tientsin Library, of the 160 staff members, only 9 are professional librarians. More than 60% joined after 1966, 1/3 of the entire staff are under 30, 4/5 of them do not have a college degree. The average age of the library administrators and the experienced librarians is 56.5 years, the oldest being 82. The situation is even more serious in libraries at lower levels. In Kirin province, 81% of the 604 staff members in public libraries at or above the county level joined after 1966, and most of the young people had only had a junior-high level education.

In libraries, as well as in other places, the old traditions and codes of ethics were broken down during the Gang of Four days, and have not yet been

rebuilt. Many young people were undisciplined. One article in the Bulletin of the China Society of Library Science laments that with some libraries, especially the medium-sized and small ones, there is no guarantee that they will open according to schedule. The staff members could use all kinds of excuses either to close the library earlier or to open it later. Some take advantage of their position, lend restricted or rare books to friends and relatives, buy new books which they personally like, or take new books out without accessioning them. Due to the staff's low educational level, their efficiency and competency is questionable.

Fifth, the library education. There are formal library science programs in universities, plus workshops and other informal training programs.

I. The university library science programs:

Although the first library school, Boone Library School, was established in Wuchang in 1920, progress in library education has been slow. Most of the trained librarians in the early days were graduates of this school. It became a department of Wuhan University in 1953. After 1949, another library science department was founded at Peking University. For a short while, there were training classes in a few other universities, but all except these two departments were suspended by 1962. All together there have been 2,000-odd graduates, 1,800 of whom came from these two. Another 1,250 had taken correspondence courses offered by them before the Cultural Revolution. It was not until 1978 that new library science departments sprang up in more than a dozen colleges and universities.

In the two universities, there are the following programs:

(1) The undergraduate program is the principal one. It is intended for the training of library staff for larger libraries. In the past thirty years it seems to have undergone quite a few changes. The lengths of the program have

been shifted back and forth frequently between two and four years, but both have four-year programs now (Peking University since 1977 and Wuhan University since 1978). Their curriculum covers four areas: (A) political theories, (B) basic curriculum, (C) library science courses, (D) languages. Between 1949 and 1957 courses on library science were social science-oriented, plus some courses in Marxism-Leninsm and Societ librarianship. In 1962 more natural science courses were added. After 1976, courses such as information science, audio-visual materials, and the preservation of library materials have been included.

(2) The Graduate program, which is intended to train library science educators and researchers, has not been fully developed. Before the program was suspended during the Cultural Revolution, there were only two graduate students at Peking University. Both universities started a 3-year graduate program in 1978. They decided in 1979 to have more graduate students.

(3) Special programs are intended to improve the skills of those who are already in the profession, and usually take one or two years. Some of the programs emphasize basic professional training; others may concentrate on one special topic. For instance, Peking University offered a one-year program in 1975 on rare books. Wuhan University offered a one-year program in 1978 on classification, and a two-year program in 1979 on information science.

(4) Correspondence courses are also intended for improving the skills of those already in the profession. Peking University began a 4-year program in 1956, and Wuhan University began a 3-year program in 1960. Before the programs were suspended during the Cultural Revolution, the two departments had 1,253 students in 38 cities, of whom only 390 received certificates.

II. Workshops are important for training of new staff members in smaller libraries, as well as providing continuing education for older librarians. They may be organized by (1) national administrative units such as the Ministry of Culture, the Academy of Science and the Ministry of Higher Education for

training librarians in their own systems; (2) public libraries at different levels in cooperation with local administrative units or labor unions; (3) local coordination committees or library science societies; and (4) libraries in the same region that pool their resources. For example, workshops on rare books were established in 1978 in the South, the Southwest, and the North, for the compilation of a national union catalog of rare books on Chinese classics.

III. Informal training includes one-to-four-year programs at night schools often organized by libraries cooperatively, lectures and, most frequently, on-the-job training.

So far, China seems to have put more emphasis on the informal training than the structured, more formal programs. It has to rely more on informal training because of its shortage of teachers and equipment. It is gratifying that the leaders in China have recognized now the importance of trained librarians, and great improvement in library education programs has appeared in the past two or three years.

In conclusion, the development of Chinese libraries has been conditioned by political and economic conditions of the country. The Communist Party has dominated every aspect of library operations. The purposes and policies of libraries have thus been changed several times in accordance with shifting party lines. As we know, the smooth operation of a library requires certain time-honored traditions and regulations, which must needs be observed, and well-trained personnel are in urgent need to continue the tradition. Right now, Chinese libraries are devoted to working for the four modernizations, and are in a hurry to catch up with those of the most advanced countries. But Rome was not built in one day. The recovery from the disastrous effects of the Cultural

Revolution will take a long time, and grandiose projects such as a national network of on-line bibliographic and information retrieval will require a vast amount of money which China cannot yet afford. It is hoped that for the long and difficult tasks ahead the intelligent and dedicated librarians will be given bigger shares in policy-making and be really allowed to exercise their professional judgement and pursue more stable goals.